

(b) Some NHs in Jharkhand pass through areas affected by Naxal activities. These NHs are being developed in a phased manner depending upon the availability of funds and *inter-se* priority of works.

(c) and (d) Nearly 192 kms of NH-2 is covered under Golden Quadrilateral in Jharkhand. A length of 75 kms of NH-33 from Hazaribagh to Ranchi has been included for four laning under NHDP Phase-III A. 190 kms length of NH-33 from Barhi to Hazaribagh and Ranchi to Jamshedpur is included under NHDP Phase-III B. In addition, two-laning with paved shoulder is proposed under NHDP Phase-IV which may also include some of the National Highways in Jharkhand. Proposal for NHDP Phase IV has, however, not been finalized. Conversion of NHs to at least 2-lanes is a continuing process depending upon availability of funds and no time frame is fixed for it.

Scrapping of fleet of Indian Shipping Companies

1748. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that more than half the fleet owned by the Indian shipping companies is due to be scrapped in the next five years and it will take around \$ 4 billion to replace it;

(b) whether it is a fact that India's share in overseas shipping trade has slipped to 13.7 per cent from 40 per cent in the late 1980s and as a result, the country has to depend on foreign ships to a considerable extent resulting in higher freight payments; and

(c) if so, the details of the proposed phasing out of Indian ships?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) The scrapping of ships is primarily on commercial considerations, which is related to prevailing global freight rates for shipping. At present, the same is also influenced because of MARPOL regulation of International Maritime Organization (IMO) for phasing out of single hull tankers by 2010. Scrapping of vessels is a continuing process and it is matched up by new acquisitions. It is a fact that overseas cargo carried by Indian ships has slipped to 13.7% from 40.7% in 1987-88. This decrease has occurred because growth of Indian shipping has

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not been able to match the growth of EXIM trade from India thereby foreign ships carry large amount of Indian cargo. Freight rates are decided on competitive basis.

Under performance of NHAI

1749. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the road sector projects are proving to be a speed-breaker along the infrastructure highway, with the sector being the poorest performer among all infrastructure sectors during April-June, 2006;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the road sector growth decelerated by a striking 37 per cent during the first quarter of the fiscal; and

(c) if so, whether Government have made investigations to find out the cause of under performance of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and the action proposed thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) There was a press report indicating 37% decrease in growth rate. In fact declining trend in terms of the completed length is on account of the fact that National Highways Development Project (NHDP) Phase-I is gradually getting completed and only a part of it remains to be completed due to poor performance of contractors, while NHDP Phase-II projects have been awarded recently and their completion date is 2009,

Collection of Toll Tax

1750. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the norms, rules and guidelines in collecting Toll Tax on roads and bridges;

(b) how such contracts are given;

(c) whether they are required to pay Service Tax; and

(d) whether there is any time limit or monetary limit for collection of Toll Tax?